

Remarks

The examiner is thanked for the Office Action mailed October 2, 2003. In that Office Action, the examiner indicated that the application contains claims to three patentably distinct categories of invention designated as follows:

- I. Claims 1-11 and 13-20 drawn to a method of manufacturing a contoured cellulosic article.
- II. Claims 12-22 drawn to a consolidated cellulosic article.
- III. Claims 1-11 and 22, drawn to a method of manufacturing a contoured cellulosic article.

The examiner also indicated that the invention contains two patentably distinct species:

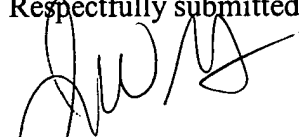
Species A: Machining is performed along one of a longitudinal and lateral axis of a mat;

Species B: Machining is performed along both a longitudinal and lateral axis of a mat.

Applicant elects Group I, claims 1-11 and 13-20, drawn to a method of manufacturing a contoured cellulosic article. Applicant also elects Species A wherein machining is performed along one of a lateral and a longitudinal axis. A review of the claims indicates that claims 1 and 13 are generic. Claims 1-5, 10-14 and 19-22 are generic to both Species A and B. Species A is specifically defined by claims 6, 8, 15 and 16. Applicant's Group 1, Species A election indicates that claims 1-6, 8, 10-16, and 19-20 are readable on Species A. Applicant makes the election without traverse.

If the examiner believes that a personal discussion of the application would advance prosecution, the examiner is encouraged to contact the applicant's attorney phone number listed below. It is believed that no additional charges are due for this submission. However, if this is incorrect, please debit Account 50-0548 and notify the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JWB', is written over the typed name.

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